

Around USAG Benelux

USAG Benelux


Meteor-Heraut transformation

The U.S. Army Garrison Benelux Meteor-Heraut newspaper is being published electronically as new publisher negotiations continue.

Electronic editions of the Meteor-Heraut are sent via email across USAG Benelux community and available on-line at www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil.

309th Airlift Squadron

Air Force Ball set



The 309th Airlift Squadron is hosting the U.S. Air Force Ball Sept. 16 at the SHAPE Club's Main Ballroom. This year marks the service's 59th birthday. A reception will kickoff the gala at 6 p.m., followed by a dinner at 7 p.m.

For ticket information in the Chièvres Garrison area, call 423-3987; in Brussels, call 365-9428 or 369-3457.

Gas Prices

Costs a crude mix

Gas prices were mixed in Belgium as unleaded prices were lower and diesel prices jumped for September Total Fina fuel cards sold on SHAPE and the Army Air Force Exchange Service.

The 95-grade gas card dropped from \$165.88 to \$149.25 or \$2.84 per gallon. Unleaded 98-grade fuel card prices decreased from \$178.58 to \$154.35 or \$2.93 per gallon. Diesel fuel card costs jumped to \$164.60 in September for 200-liters, or \$3.13 per gallon.

In the Netherlands, new sell prices for mid-grade and premium unleaded fuel were mixed as unleaded prices fell while diesel prices climbed according to information released by AAFES.

Super unleaded dropped slightly to \$3.260 per gallon; super-plus unleaded plunged 16 cents to \$3.366 per gallon and diesel climbed 7 cents to \$3.149 per gallon.

Four Days of the Yser International March



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

U.S. Army Garrison Benelux Soldiers joined more than 6,000 participants from across Europe Aug. 25 for the Four Days of the Yser International March, sponsored by the Belgian Ministry of Defense to commemorate the casualties of both World Wars, particularly those who fell in the battlefields of Westhoek during the First World War. (See related story, page 3.)

Suspicious object exercises emergency response

Schinnen Public Affairs Office

SCHINNEN, the Netherlands - During a routine force protection inspection, Aug. 30 at the U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen Emma Mine Complex front gate, a suspicious object was noticed on a delivery truck by Securitas personnel.

A host nation explosive ordnance detachment team from Zeist, the Netherlands was dispatched to the area to investigate and, as a safety precaution, all garrison personnel were notified and areas within 200 meters of the front gate were evacuated.

U.S. military police worked hand-in-hand with the host nation authorities to mitigate the situation which turned out to be innocuous.

"I am proud of the timely reaction and professionalism of all the emergency response personnel involved," said Lt. Col. Eric Tilley, commander of USAG Schinnen. "Fortunately, this incident turned out to be benign and underscores the efficiency of the relationship shared between local emergency responders and our military personnel."

Though the situation might have caused a bit of inconvenience for some, Tilley said, "Ensuring safety is our number one priority and the timely response of the host nation EOD staff and various emergency response personnel was key to the positive outcome of this situation."

Benelux celebrates Women's Equality Day

By Thad Moyseowicz
Brussels Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Garrison Benelux recognized the suffrage of women during the 20th century Aug. 28 as members of the three garrisons came together in Brussels to celebrate Women's Equality Day.

Patsy Herbaut, the USAG Benelux Equal Employment Officer, kicked off the celebration explaining how Congress, in 1971, designated Aug. 26 Women's Equality Day to coincide with the 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The 19th Amendment was the culmination of the Women's Suffrage movement



PHOTO: Isabelle Gillet

Debra Young, U.S. Army Garrison Benelux deputy garrison commander (left), and Christiane Vienne, Minister of Health, Social Action and Equal Opportunity for the government of the Walloon Region of Belgium cut the cake commemorating Women's Equality Day which was celebrated Aug. 28, at the USAG Brussels Three-Star Lounge.



Col. Dean A. Nowowiejski
USAG Benelux Commander

The theme for the Benelux Link just released this week for September and October is fitness. There are several feature articles across all communities about opportunities for fitness and people available to help you with your

Nowowiejski Notes

goals. Many of you may not know about the Civilian Fitness Program in the Benelux, and our own Health Promotion Coordinator. Chris Stakers efforts reinforce the theme of the Benelux Link on fitness, and you can find his program information under the Civilian Fitness link on the main page at www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil. There are a variety of programs that change over time, all designed to meet specific health and fitness needs, including free assessments.

Next week is National Suicide Prevention Week, Sept. 10-16, 2006. Suicide prevention is your business, and there are several themes and resources to help you. First, I recommend the militaryonesource.com web page, designed for all services, with a link on the USAG Benelux web page, left side.

In Military One Source you will find articles and videos on the subject of suicide and suicide prevention. Most important, if you are thinking of suicide, there is a toll free number from anywhere overseas where you can talk to a professional counselor 24 hours a day, seven days a week. 800-3429-6477. Additionally, across the Benelux we have several Military and Family Life Consultants who also are available for confidential counseling on an easy access, no records basis. You can find them on the Benelux web page, too. We have many assets available to prevent suicide, but to take advantage of them, we all must be attuned to those around us who show signs that need our immediate attention. The Army's suicide prevention program focuses on four major areas: encouraging help-

seeking behavior, developing life-coping skills, raising vigilance on suicide awareness, and integrating and synchronizing unit and community programs. We are doing that together here.

Finally, the fall general elections are just around the corner. It is time to request your absentee ballot by postcard, and to insure that your voter registration is current. By the time you accomplish these goals, it will be time to receive, mark, and mail your ballots. There is a new web site for overseas voters, with state specific information, and some online request forms. See the Federal Voting Assistance Programs new Integrated Voting Alternative site at www.fvap.gov. Use your right to vote, bought by sacrifice of our fellow Americans. Its time now to act for November.

Deadline approaches for filing body armor claims

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Department of Defense has set Oct. 3 as the claims filing deadline for Soldiers seeking reimbursement for certain private purchases of protective, health, and safety equipment such as personal body armor.

Pursuant to a 2004 Act of Congress, the armed services began reimbursing servicemembers in November 2005 for private purchases of qualifying equipment made between Sept. 11, 2001, and April 1, 2006, if purchases were made in anticipation of or during the servicemember's deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan.

Soldiers who made purchases qualifying for reimbursement, and have yet to file claims, must do so by Oct. 3. Claims should be filed with the Soldier's current unit. Former Soldiers should mail their claims to the U.S. Army Claims Service at Fort Meade, Md.

More information on the reimbursement program is available at www.jagcnet.army.mil. Follow the link to the "Protective Gear Reimbursement Program." Soldiers also may contact the Claims Service at 301-677-7009, ext. 431.

National Security Personnel System Web training available

USAREUR – Department of Defense employees in Europe can learn more about the new National Security Personnel System (NSPS) through a new web-based training course.

NSPS 101 provides an overview of the basic elements of the new human resources management system.

The course is designed to address questions such as "What happens to me when my position is converted to NSPS?" "How does the pay-for-performance system work?" The course also includes a conversion GS to NSPS calculator that will help employee's identify their career group, pay schedule, pay band and estimated pro-rated within-grade increase buy-in.

The NSPS 101 course takes approximately one and one-half hours to complete. To learn more about NSPS, go to www.per.hq.usareur.army.mil/CPD and click on the NSPS NewsFlash link.

McKiernan Sends #15-06

Well-being survey results

1. In February 2006, I encouraged you to participate in a survey that was being conducted to measure force well-being and determine your satisfaction or dissatisfaction with programs, facilities, services, and other aspects of living in the Army in Europe.

2. The overall survey results indicate satisfaction with support services and the readiness of our families to sustain themselves well during deployments and transformation. Among the most highly rated categories were Army ethos, pay, welfare, and recreation. Areas that indicated a need for improvement were access to healthcare, home-finding services, the condition of our barracks, and concerns

over substance abuse in our military communities.

3. To help address your concerns, we are putting together a task force of key stakeholders to concentrate on areas needing improvement. In addition, we plan to conduct another well-being survey in 2007. I encourage you to participate in that survey as well. Doing so will enable you to make your voices heard once again. The dates for that survey have not yet been determined, but will be announced throughout the Army in Europe as we get closer to the survey period.

4. I want to express my sincere appreciation to everyone who took time to respond to the survey. I also want to thank those who helped administer the survey. Your participation provided valuable feedback to me and my staff and will help us concentrate our efforts on ensuring the readiness and well-being of our Soldiers, civilians, and families.



General David D. McKiernan
Commanding General, USAREUR

Website outlines voting options for troops overseas

By Sgt. Sara Wood,
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Aug. 25, 2006 – A new website developed by the Defense Department provides information on electronic voting options for service members and other U.S. citizens living overseas.

The Integrated Voting Alternative Site, which went online Sept. 1, includes information from all 55 states and territories on the various electronic ballot request and delivery alternatives available to U.S. citizens living overseas covered under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, said Scott Wiedmann, deputy director of the Federal Voting Assistance Program.

The IVAS can be found on the Federal Voting Assistance Program Website (www.fvap.gov).

The IVAS has an electronic Federal Post Card Application – the form citizens use to request an absentee ballot – that can be filled out and submitted to the state officials via a secure site.

"Servicemembers, just like any other American citizen, have the right to participate in the electoral process," he said.

Different states have different electronic voting options, but they almost all allow overseas citizens to use fax machines for at least part of the voting process, Wiedmann said. "About 30 states offer blank ballot delivery by fax, and 24 states allow citizens to return ballots by fax."

State governments are responsible for the voting process, and DoD does not register any voters or send in ballots, Wiedmann said. The department acts as an intermediary, ensuring citizens covered under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act have a chance to vote, he said. "Service members should always exercise their right to vote."

For more information, call the toll free number 0800-11402 from Belgium or 0800-0228213 from the Netherlands.

Benelux Soldiers march in Yser

By J.D. Hardesty
Meteor-Heraut Editor

Twenty-two U.S. Army Garrison Benelux Soldiers representing all three garrisons walked through the streets and countryside of Diksmuide, Belgium Aug. 25, participating in the Four Days of the Yser International March.

The lush farms, trees, and European architecture has replaced the waste lands of trench warfare, mud and artillery craters that left most of the Ypres Salient uninhabitable for years.

Soldiers representing several nationalities across Europe marched with local villagers both young and old. Some walking the 16-kilometer route, while others sojourned 32 kilometers.

For nearly 90 years, the people, the villages and the landscape have replaced the devastation of World War I where America's grandfathers fought to liberate Europe from tyranny. The renaissance of recovery is complete.

The Four Days of the Yser may not be as famous as the Nijmegen March but this yearly Belgian march has become an international annual military exercise open to both civilians and military with a three-fold focus:

- Enhance the relation between the Belgian Armed Forces and the nation by bringing the military and the civilians together during a common sports event;
- Commemorate the casualties of both World Wars and in particular those who fell on the Westhoek battlefields during World War I; and
- Promote the historical and tourist assets of the Westhoek.

"The march helped us build camaraderie with our host nation neighbors," said USAG Benelux Command Sgt. Maj. John Gaines.

While walking along the canals and



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

U.S. Army Garrison Benelux Command Sgt. Maj. John Gaines (left) walks with Maurice Sperandieu, an 80-year-old World War II veteran who served with Patton's Third Army, Aug. 25, during the Four Days of the Yser International March. Twenty-two USAG Benelux Soldiers from Chièvres Garrison, USAG Schinnen and USAG Brussels collectively participate in the 16-kilometer (9.3-mile) walk on the third day of the march through the Diksmuide, Belgium, countryside.

through the villages, Benelux Soldiers could be seen talking to fellow marchers, sharing a laugh and admiring the scenery.

After the march, many of the Soldiers

joined their hosts for lunch, followed by a celebration honoring those who gave their all for freedom during two World Wars.

Brussels...continued from page 1

in the United States, and, by codifying the constitutional right of women to vote, was a milestone in the U.S. civil rights movement.

Women's Equality Day has that special designation only under U.S. legislation. In recognition of the truly multi-national environment of the three Benelux garrisons and the universality of women's equality, Madame Christiane Vienne, Minister of Health, Social Action and Equal Opportunity for the government of the Walloon Region of Belgium, served as guest speaker at the event. Vienne is also a former Belgian parliamentarian.

USAG Benelux Commander Col. Dean A. Nowowiejski, noted it was a special and welcome "first" to have a serving Belgian minister address the Benelux garrisons. He commented on the significance of Women's Equality Day in the broader context of the continuing struggle for equality of opportunity and civil rights.

Nowowiejski noted that while "we still have to have equal opportunity officers in the Army," the U.S. Army had been an acknowledged leader in EO for years. Vienne reviewed the history

of the Women's Suffrage movement in the United States from its beginning in the early 19th century.

She compared it to similar movements in Europe, noting that some nations had preceded the United States in extending the franchise to women while many others had followed.

Irrespective of the many genuine advances that had come about with universal suffrage, Vienne echoed Nowowiejski's comments, that, while much had been achieved, much remained to be done in order for there to be true equality of opportunity in our societies.

She pointed to Belgian issues of inequality that she was confronted with in the execution of her ministerial portfolio, and noted that the struggle "is not yet over."

Vienne's remarks were followed by a presentation to her of a commemorative gift on behalf of the Benelux Garrisons by Debra Young, the Benelux deputy garrison commander, and flowers on behalf of the Garrisons' Soldiers.

The event concluded with a lunch prepared by USAG Brussels Soldiers.

About the Meteor-Heraut

The *Meteor-Heraut* is an authorized unofficial civilian enterprise newspaper published for the U.S. Army under AR 360-1 for U.S. military personnel in the Benelux nations by the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux. Editorial content is provided by public affairs offices of the USAG Benelux, USAG Schinnen and USAG Brussels. Opinions expressed are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the USAG Benelux. Appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Defense, Department of the Army, or USAG Benelux of the products or services advertised.

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Policy

- We encourage letters to the editor, but they must be signed. We will consider withholding the name of the author upon request. Letters regarding an issue should contribute to informational interest.
- We reserve the right to edit all material for style, to fit available space, to resolve libel, safety or force protection issues and to correct grammar.
- Submit articles in plain text and separate photographic files, but publication depends upon the judgment of the editor.
- Event announcements must use civilian dates and times. Spell out acronyms and include a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address. We cannot reproduce prepared flyers in the *Meteor-Heraut*.

Advertising

- Messages from readers from profit and non-profit organizations which involve money exchange constitutes advertising.
- Neither the *Meteor-Heraut* staff nor other public affairs personnel can accept advertising requests.
- The appearance of advertising, including inserts, does not constitute endorsement of the products or services offered.
- Any gambling or lottery requiring payment for chance cannot be advertised as stated in 18 U.S.C. 1302.
- No advertising is currently being accepted as the *Meteor-Heraut* completes the process of changing publishers.

Deadline

Copy and photographs are due by noon 11 calendar days before publication date.

Electronic newspaper

The *Meteor-Heraut* will be published in an electronic format until the process of acquiring a new publisher is complete.

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Meteor-Heraut Deadline and Publication Dates

Copy is due at noon

Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date	Deadline	Print Date
Sept. 11	Sept. 22	Oct. 9	Oct. 20	Nov. 6	Nov. 17	Dec. 4	Dec. 15
Sept. 25	Oct. 6	Oct. 23	Nov. 3	Nov. 20	Dec. 1	Jan. 3	Jan. 12

Chièvres Garrison...serving SHAPE/Chièvres communities

Community Notes

Stress relief class offered

Armed Forces Team Building is sponsoring a stress relief class at the Community Activity Center on Chièvres Air Base. The class will take place Sept. 19, from 9:30-1130 a.m. For more information email AFTBfamily@benelux.army.mil.

Chièvres Garrison hosts Town Hall

Chièvres Garrison and the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux staff will host its quarterly Town Hall meeting for the SHAPE and Chièvres community Sept. 20, at 6:30 p.m. at Hotel Maisières.

Key members of the garrison leadership will be available to answer questions concerning safety, schools, housing, employment, banking, financing, health care, morale, welfare, recreation, public works, and religious support.

If you have any questions or concerns which you would like to address in advance please send them to the USAG Benelux's Plans, Integration, and Analysis Office (PAIO), Bldg 30, Daumerie Caserne or email your question to: paio@benelux.army.mil.

Questions may also be submitted via the Chièvres Garrison website <http://www.garrisonchievres.eur.army.mil>, find "Town Hall" in the *Quick Read* items and submit questions there as well.

Family Readiness hosts pot-luck, welcome dinner

The Family Readiness Group from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Chièvres Garrison is hosting a pot-luck and welcome dinner Sept. 18, at 6:30 p.m. at Hotel Maisières in Casteau, Belgium across from SHAPE for all community members. For more information, call 361-5288 or 361-5134.

Military exercise

The Chièvres Garrison will conduct a force protection, anti-terrorism and consequences management exercise Sept. 19. This exercise will occur on Caserne Daumerie and Chièvres air base only.

Possible delays at the entrance and exit gates can be expected and roads may be temporarily blocked during regular duty hours on the caserne as well as on the air base.

For more information, call 361-5197.

Honoring American World War I Soldiers



Photos: Cis Spook

Maurice Sperandieu, a World War II veteran, surrounded by Soldiers of the Chièvres Garrison joined the Color Guard after participating in the Four Days of the Yser International March for the ceremonies held at Diksmuide Aug. 25 to commemorate both World War I and World War II events.

Chièvres Garrison Commander Lt. Col. John G. Romero salutes after laying a wreath in the Yser river commemorating the American Soldiers who gave their lives in the area of Diksmuide during World War I. Many of them rest at Flanders Field American cemetery in Waregem, Belgium, the final resting place for 368 American Soldiers.



The Color Guard and numerous patriotic associations pay tribute during the ceremony at the Yser river.



Chièvres Garrison gets WWII Tank

By J.D. Hardesty
Meteor-Heraut Editor

More than 60 years after plowing through the Third Reich battling Panzers and Tigers an M-4 Sherman tank found a new home Aug. 22 on Chièvres Air Base.

Battle Thunder, the 30-ton tank, was shipped here from the 1st Infantry Division Museum on Warner Barracks in Bamberg, Germany.

The "Big Red One," as the division is known, officially ended its 10-year residency in Germany in July, moving to Fort Riley, Kan., earlier this month where they will take on the mission of training foreign security forces training teams in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom.

"We got it done in one day," said Jeff Romero, chief of the plans and operations division of the Directorate of Logistics for U.S. Army Garrison Benelux.

USAG Benelux Host Nation Liaison Officer Michael Laney coordinated with the Belgian Ministry of Defense to receive customs clearance for the 30-ton track vehicle to be trucked to the air base.

An 80-ton crane from Mons, Belgium was used to lift the vintage cargo from the trailer and position it near the Chièvres Post Exchange parking lot.



PHOTO: J.D. Hardesty

Battle Thunder, a 30-ton vintage World War II-era, M-4 Sherman tank arrived at Chièvres Air Base Aug. 22 from the 1st Infantry Division Museum on Warner Barracks in Bamberg Germany. The "Big Red One" as the division is known, officially ended its 10-year residency in Germany in July, part of the U.S. Army's transforming the force, and moved to Fort Riley, Kan.

Chièvres Air Base visitors driving through the main entrance can see the World War II battle-tested tank when they arrive.

According to garrison staff, the (M-4 Sherman) tank will undergo a makeover, receiving new paint and markings. Officials request parents and

children do not climb on the vehicle out of concern for the safety.

A formal dedication ceremony is set for Sept. 29.

Battle Thunder's battle history is currently being researched so that it may be displayed near the tank in the future.

USAG Schinnen...serving the tri-border community

AFNORTH Bn. improves family readiness

By Capt. Malia Kekuewa
AFNORTH Battalion

Family member volunteers and community members came together at the Allied Forces Northern Europe Battalion's "Delegation Room" on Aug. 14 and 15 for two days of training to discover ways to improve and sustain the battalion's Soldier and Family Readiness Groups.

This is the second event hosted by the battalion in the past year. In February, the battalion hosted a SFRG Summit for the entire U.S. Army NATO Brigade during which similar training was conducted.

"These events train our volunteers, commanders, and military SFRG liaisons on the best ways to run their SFRGs. From deployment readiness, post-deployment adjustments, fundraising, "branding," advertising, and motivating Soldiers and family members to participate in the groups, the training event touched upon several areas of SFRG operations," said Lt. Col. BJ Constantine, AFNORTH Bn. commander.

One of the main objectives of the training was the exploration and discussion of the unique challenges of serving in the multi-national, multi-cultural NATO



PHOTO: Beatrice Constantine

Marie Claxton from USAG Schinnen Army Community Services leads a discussion with members of the Soldiers Family Readiness Group on pre-deployment and post-deployment readiness for families and offered tips on how to sustain good family relations during the stress of deployment.

environment and to determine how to best utilize the resources available to commanders to run world-class SFRGs.

The training was attended by 10 family members and command team members, with eight children also participating. Teen volunteers assisted with child care during the training sessions.

"The battalion's delegation room was the ideal location for this training as it allowed parents and children to be located in the same large room with two distinctive areas – a training area and a child care area," said Constantine.

Capt. Trina Wallace, commander of headquarters, headquarters company, AFNORTH Bn., said the training "presented an excellent opportunity to share ideas and experiences among volunteers who are active or have been active in SFRGs."

The two-day training session, lead by the battalion's SFRG Support Assistant, Katina Yunt and the U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen's Deployment and Mobilization Specialist, Marie Claxton, "succeeded in expanding the knowledge and vision of attendees, and facilitated their ability to lead successful and effective SFRGs to better support battalion's expanding deployment roles in support of ISAF IX and ISAF X," Constantine said.

Women's suffrage paves way for future generations

By LaDonna Davis
Schinnen Public Affairs Office

Celebrating 86 years of women suffrage, U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen joined the nation in observing Women's Equality Day during their annual Women's Equality Day luncheon held Aug. 24 at Club 13, hosted by the Joint Forces Command Brunssum, the Netherlands.

On Aug. 26, 1920, the 19th Amendment was certified as part of the U.S. Constitution granting women the right to vote. The road to victory for women was not an easy one, nor was it short.

After a culmination of a 72 year-long fight, which began in Seneca Falls, N.Y., in 1848, with the world's first women's rights convention followed by years of women's suffrage supporters writing, lecturing, marching and lobbying, American women everywhere won their battle for voting equality and the Constitution was amended.

"The most important thing you can do is take advantage of that right the suffrages fought so hard for," said Nancy C. Bernardy, Ph.D., guest speaker for the Tri-border Women's Equality Day luncheon. "It can be a pain to live over here and get that absentee ballot and submit it, but it's so important to do it."

See EQUALITY, page 7



PHOTO: LaDonna Davis

Guest speaker for the Tri-border community Women's Equality Day luncheon, Nancy C. Bernardy, Ph.D., gives attendees a brief history lesson on the women's suffrage movement and offers words of wisdom for women today.

Vacation Bible School gives youth inspiration

By LaDonna Davis
Schinnen Public Affairs Office

More than 120 boys and girls age three to 12 of various faiths participated in this year's Vacation Bible School held at the Joint Forces Command, Brunssum Chapel Aug. 14-18.

VBS is a combined effort of the Anglican, Catholic and Protestant faith communities and offers young children the teachings of God and the Bible through song, arts and crafts, and story-telling.

This year's theme is "fiesta" which means party and implies a celebratory tone that is full of fun and life "just like Christ," says VBS Director, Dr. Consuelo Muñoz-Cook.

VBS is offered each year right before most children return to school from summer break. The program is designed to offer children a fun, learning atmosphere where they can play with friends and learn about Jesus.

"We offer the children a school type environment where they are surrounded by children and caring adults," says Muñoz-Cook. "The Bible portion is that we're trying to follow what the bible said which is spread the word and bring others to Christ and Vacation Bible School is a fun way to learn about Christian teachings and the kids get to listen to music, sing, dance, play games outdoors and they listen to Bible stories."

Keeping in step with this year's theme, the halls, sanctuary and classrooms of the JFC Chapel were all adorned with colorful, fun and inviting decorations. In addition to playing games and doing arts and crafts, the children learn prayers, act out bible stories, and exercise their vocal chords (and the teachers ears) by screaming "Jesus" whenever the word "fiesta" is used.

"I like (VBS) because we get to do lots of fun activities and we get to learn about Jesus and God," said seven year-old Cameron Carpenter. "I usually like doing the games outside and doing arts and crafts. Last year I met new people and this year I saw

See VBS, page 7

USAG Brussels...serving the tri-mission community

Brussels youth hits to the World Series

By Thad Moyseowicz

Brussels Public Affairs Office

Last month Brussels American School junior Matt Oppenheim had the honor of playing in the Senior League Division of baseball's International Little League World Series in Bangor, Maine.



Belgian teammates Matt Oppenheim and Sean Lyke in Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) colors at the World Series in Bangor.

Over the past five years Oppenheim has been on three winning teams that have put Brussels on the map in both European and International youth baseball. He has been playing organized baseball for some seven years both in the United States and in Europe.

"I'm an Army brat, and the son of an Army brat," Oppenheim said.

Born in Germany, he began playing in Monterey, Calif., and continued during his father's postings at Fort Bragg, N.C. and Boston. A die-hard Red Sox fan, Oppenheim said he found that playing in the Boston Little Leagues and having the ability to go to Fenway Park were mutually supportive activities.

After a short assignment in Garmisch, Germany, the family came to Brussels where Oppenheim's father, Jeff, is assigned to the U.S. Mission to NATO. Matt began looking for a team soon after arrival.

Although baseball is not a hugely popular sport in Belgium, there is a growing interest, and Oppenheim found there were enough youngsters around who shared his passion for the game to support a few teams.

The local Belgian teams contain a number of American expatriate youth, but they are not exclusively American in their composition. There were only two "military brats", Oppenheim and Sean Lyke, SHAPE, on Brussels last All-Star team.

Oppenheim said that because the

population pool of potential players is so small, the resulting teams tend to become very close and they get to know well each other's strengths and weaknesses. Oppenheim noted that he's been playing with a six or so of the same players during his five years in Brussels.

"It's a really good core group," he said, "but we're not exclusionary; we're always looking for new blood."

"Little League," Oppenheim continued, "is an umbrella term for what are actually three leagues. Little League proper is for 11-12 year olds, Junior League is for 13-14 year olds, and Senior League is for 15-17 year olds."

Teams are formed in Belgium each year under the Waterloo Little League to play in regular local competition. At the end of the regular season, 11 players are invited to represent Team Brussels at the Little League Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) Championships held each summer in Miejska Gora and Kutno, Poland.

Oppenheim's Team Brussels participated in the 22-game elimination series against nine other regional teams held last July in Miejska Gora.

Despite a hard-fought, cliff-hanger 3-

2 loss to Italy, the Brussels team prevailed in the regional tournament, winning the right to represent EMEA in the 2006 World Series by defeating France 10-0.

Ten teams from around the world vied for the World Series title.

"The competition was really awesome," said Oppenheim. "It's a real privilege to get to play youth baseball at this level, the opportunity of a lifetime."

Although Brussels lost its four games, Oppenheim said the team enjoyed watching the other teams play.

"We should have won two of them," he said. "There's some incredible talent out there. The shortstop for the eventual world champion team from Venezuela has already been signed by the Phillies."

Matt's mother, Kris, agreed with the "opportunity of a lifetime" characterization.

"My mom was at the European regionals," he said. "Well, when we won the European title, my parents decided that our entire family should come to Bangor."

This was no small logistical undertaking as Matt has five younger siblings.

"I really appreciated my entire family being there to cheer our team on," he said.

Since he'll be too old to play next season, Oppenheim has hung up his Little League cleats but there is no doubt he'll be looking for another team.

"It's a great way to stay connected with a great American sport while living in Belgium," he said.



Photos: Lt. Col. Jeff Oppenheim

Matt Oppenheim raps out a hit during a game at the Senior league Division International Little League World Series last month in Bangor, Maine. Oppenheim, who has been playing baseball for seven years, considered his participation in the series the highlight so far of his favorite sport. He is a junior at Brussels American School.

Community Notes

Car Free Day

On Sunday, Sept. 17 from 9 a.m. until 7 p.m. motorized traffic will be prohibited in the 19 communes forming the greater Brussels area to adhere to the European Mobility Week. The objective of this initiative is to encourage the use of transportation means other than private vehicles. The only exception is made for taxis, emergency services, public transportation and drivers who have been issued a special permit. The Brussels bus line will maintain their Saturday service and provide transportation free of charge.

As many outside activities will be going on in the streets, a speed limit of 30 km per hour will be in force within the Brussels perimeter.

Arts & Craft Center

Whether you would like to design your own vase, make your creative frames or build a shelf, the Arts & Craft Center is now available on Tuesday from 1 until 9 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday from noon until 8 p.m., Friday from noon until 4 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. on the first floor of Bldg 1 at USAG Brussels.

For more information, call 368-9629.

Transition Assistance Program

The TAP program is open to all military members, their spouses and civilians contemplating leaving government service. It includes a pre-separation briefing and a career transition workshop.

The briefing reviews the benefits and services available to military service members and their families as they transit from the service whereas the workshop covers topics as interviews, reviewing job offers, career exploration, and much more.

The three-day program will be held Sept. 19-21 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. at Bldg 2, Community Conference Room, USAG Brussels.

For more information, call 368-9735.

Library

The following opening hours of the USAG Brussels library will be in effect until further notice:

Tuesday from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., Wednesday from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m., Thursday from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., Friday from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m.

The library is closed on Monday and Saturday.

For more information, call 368-9791.

Belgium celebrates 62 years of liberty

Several ceremonies were held recently to commemorate the 62nd anniversary of the liberation of some parts of Belgium.

"Tanks in Town" is the name of the event that commemorates the liberation of Mons on Sept. 2, 1944 by the 3rd Armored and 1st Infantry divisions.



Photo: Cis Spook

A Halftrack leads the way of the vintage convoy through the Mons countryside.

This year, 32 World War II tanks were displayed and participated in a parade through town and re-enactment of the liberation along with

some 50 vintage vehicles and 52 Harley Davidson motorcycles from the same war era.



Photo: Cis Spook

Fifty-two World War II Harley Davidson motorcycles from several European countries gathered at this year's edition of "Tanks in Town".

"This is the first time we gather such a number of vintage Harley Davidson motorcycles and it has been established as a Guinness World Record," stated Pierre Deghaye, one of the organizers of the event.

At Beauwelz, in the area of Chimay, Belgium, a plaque was unveiled honoring



Photo: Marie-Lise Baneton

Patriotic flagbearers stand with the Color Guard at the plaque honoring the 39th Infantry Regiment in Beauwelz, Belgium.

the 39th Infantry Regiment who liberated the village on Sept. 2, 1944. On this very day, the first

12 American infantrymen died on Belgian soil just some 10 kilometers away from Beauwelz. Every year, the Belgian-American Foundation chaired by Dr. Paul Delahaye, veterinarian, makes a point in remembering during a commemorative ceremony at Monceau-Imbrechies where 12 white representative headstones stand for these infantrymen who fell during a surprise mortar and machine gun attack. "No one must ever forget the sacrifices of these brave Americans," stated Delahaye during the ceremony attended by the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux color guard.

USAG Brussels participated with a color guard in a ceremony at Tienen commemorating the liberation of the town on Sept. 6, 1944 by the 2nd Armored Division "Hell on Wheels". "They crossed the ocean after months of training, not knowing that they would go through intensive combats over a period of one year," said Jan Laermans, chairman of the Friends of the Liberation of Tienen association.



Photo: Cis Spook

Tanks and armored vehicles roar down a field re-enacting the liberation of Mons.

VBS...continued from page 5

some of my old friends and met some new friends."

The program is open to kids in preschool to the seventh grade, but children age 13 and older were given a chance to lend their helping hands as volunteers throughout the week as well.

"The best part of volunteering is working with the kids," said Sarah Kuska, 13. "This is a new experience for me because we just moved here but I know that the kids got a lot out of it and learned a lot about Christianity."

"I enjoy spreading the message of Jesus through music," said volunteer Colleen Haggerty, 14. "I wanted to use my time while I was still on break to do something like this and spread the message and teach little kids about Jesus."

Throughout the week each group of kids (sepa-

rated by age group), learned a song accompanied by dance moves to perform at the finale program which was held the last day of the program in front of parents and teachers.

"To see all those kids and to see the auditorium packed with cheerful, joyful people gives me such an inspiration, said Muñoz-Cook. "The teachings are always so much fun and always reflect Christ's role in our lives. He's our savior, he's our leader and he's our friend."

Young boys and girls sing and dance during the finale show of this year's Vacation Bible School held at the Joint Forces Command Brunssum Chapel from Aug. 14-18.



Photo: LaDonna Davis

Equality...continued from page 5

In 1971, U.S. Congress designated Aug. 26 as "Women's Equality Day," and in celebration of the historic civil rights movement, men and women of the Tri-border community came together to dine, converse, and reflect on the struggles and hardships of the women's suffrage movement and commemorate the passage of the 19th Amendment.

"Women are a powerful voice that can matter and we can make a difference," said Bernardy. "We are 51 percent of the population now so that tells you we can really change things."

Growing up during a time where women were encouraged to be nurses, secretaries, or teachers, pursuing a doctorate in psychology was not

an easy feat for Bernardy.

She came from a background where neither of her parents attended college and where the field she was pursuing was very new at the time, plus, positions were not being filled with very many women.

But through much encouragement by professors, friends and family, Bernardy gradu-

ated from Yale University with her doctorate in biological psychology.

It is because of Bernardy's background that she says today "education is key" and encourages women to go to school and get an education and pursue a career in the field that they want.

"Feminism today is about what you do," said Bernardy.

"Let your daughters know that it's okay to stand-up on their own as early as they can, to take up space in this male dominated world, to sit with their legs apart if they want to; to climb trees, to play sports to dress as they want. Let them know that they have choices because of the things that women have gone through before them."

1st Perscom News

Army changes process for evaluations

By Shane Thomas

1st Personnel Command

HEIDELBERG, Germany - The Army has changed the way officer and noncommissioned officer evaluation reports are processed and submitted to the Department of the Army.

The new processes includes digital signature authority with the Common Access Card, activating forms via the Forms Content Management Program and changes to regulations governing the Army's evaluation reporting system.

The change went into effect in July and is mandatory beginning Oct. 13.

The Army Knowledge On-line portal provides Soldiers and leaders access to the enhanced evaluation system. To obtain the forms, click on the "My Forms" tab on the AKO home page.

Users must have two programs installed on their office computers before using the new form filing procedure: PureEdge Viewer to view and complete the forms, and Silanis ApproveIt for digital signatures. Without the two programs, users will not be able to view, edit, route or digitally sign evaluations.

Users should contact their local information management office to obtain and install the software.

Each evaluator in the rating chain, including the rated Soldier, will digitally sign the report with their CAC.

Under the new process, a rated Soldier is the last person to digitally sign the electronic evaluation and the senior rater is responsible for transmitting completed document directly to HQDA.

Details on the new procedures are spelled out in Army Regulation 623-3, the "Evaluation Reporting System", and Department of the Army Pamphlet 623-3.

Additionally, Human Resources Command has provided an extensive train the trainer package on its "Evaluation's" Website: https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/TAGD/MSD/ESO/FCMP_Webpage.htm.

USAG Benelux Family Life Center**Club Beyond strings moral fiber**

By J.D. Hardesty

Meteor-Heraut Editor

Building moral fiber in America's youth meant an enlistment in the U.S. Army decades past.

Not anymore.

Several of today's youth are building moral fiber of their own through an organization called Club Beyond.

Thirty-six teens from across the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux footprint and Bitburg, Germany attended the Club Beyond High School Leadership Camp Aug. 18-20 at the USAG Benelux Family Life Center on Caserne Daumerie to string their own moral fiber before returning to school.

This Club Beyond camp, the first ever held on Caserne Daumerie, combined youth from communities spread across three countries "to successfully built up students for the beginning of the school year to enable them to be ministers and leaders in their schools," said Katy Brock, community director of SHAPE-Daumerie Club Beyond. "Whether they are aware of it or not, they are always leading someone, it is just a matter of where they are going to lead them."

While Club Beyond is a ministry to kids, "the ministry is



PHOTOS: Courtesy USAG Benelux Chaplain's Office

Thirty-six teens from across the Benelux and Bitburg, Germany attended the Club Beyond High School Leadership Camp Aug. 18-20 at the U.S. Army Garrison Benelux Family Life Center on Caserne Daumerie. This picture was taken during their visit to Parc Paradisio.

done by the kids," she said. "Students learned tools to assist in the actual running of their local programs.

"One set of parents said, 'This camp was a God-send for our daughter. The quality of kids, the facilities, the leadership, and the timing of it was perfect. Thanks,'" she said.

Each Club Beyond community brought their own adult leaders. Schinnen, the Nether-

lands and Geilenkirchen, Germany brought volunteers that included a single airman. Bitburg brought their volunteers and local single Soldiers cooked dinner for the students.

Brock said the Family Life Center facilities "were phenomenal" for the 19 boys and 17 girls who attended the retreat. "We had more than enough room to run all

of our programs and that made this weekend an outstanding success by removing any extra worries.

"We don't want students to see Club Beyond as just another club," Brock said. "We want them to see it as a way of life, and a guide for their lives throughout school."

Through Club Beyond, the U.S. Army still supports teens building their moral fiber.



Teens from communities across the Benelux and Bitburg, Germany dance the "Conga" line during the Club Beyond High School Leadership Camp Aug. 18-20 at Caserne Daumerie.

www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil

AUSA Benelux Chapter reopens

The Benelux Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) reopened in August and announced its newly elected officers:

President - 1SG (RET) Vernon Fowler; Vice President-Brussels - Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Jessen; Vice President-Schinnen - Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph Rusch; Vice President-Chièvres - Master Sgt. Thomas Frankhouser; Vice President-Shape - Sgt. 1st Class John Bates; Secretary - Sgt. 1st Class Heather Lytle; Treasurer - Master Sgt. Edward Lyke.

For more information, please contact the president at DSN 361-5559.

